

Amendment and Response

Applicant: Ravi Chandar et al.

Serial No.: 09/895,760

Filed: June 29, 2001

Docket No.: 10008058-1

Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR DETERMINING COMPUTER ACCESS WITH ELECTRONIC PAYMENT MECHANISM

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 12 and 16.

Please amend claims 1, 11, 13-15, and 17-20 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of public access computing comprising:
providing a computer system; and
permitting a user access to at least one of a software application and an input/output device of the computer system only after payment authorization has been obtained for the user from a financial instrument reader.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the using step further comprises:
displaying a screen saver on a monitor of the computer system for preventing access to the software applications until payment authorization for a user is received through an electronic payment mechanism.
3. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the displaying step further comprises:
displaying icons representing the software applications available in the computer system;
displaying information regarding prices for using the computer system; and
displaying demonstrations of the software applications.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the permitting step further comprises:
displaying a desktop user interface on a monitor of the computer system to permit access to the at least one software application and input/output devices.
5. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein the displaying step further comprises:
providing activatable keyword functions for each software application and

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input/output device including at least one of a word processor function, spreadsheet function, presentation function, application service provider function, printer function, scanner function, copier function, facsimile function, and digital sender function.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 and further comprising:
tracking use of the computer system for billing purposes including at least one of the following parameters:
time of use of the computer system;
time of use for each software application;
time of use of each peripheral input/output device;
quantity of job requests to each peripheral input/output device; and
quantity of each item produced by each peripheral input/output device.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the tracking step further comprises:
counting requests to peripheral input/output devices; and
calculating the total cost to the user including time of use for the computer system and the number of input/output requests.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the permitting step further comprises:
obtaining authorization from a financial services database for electronically charging a user's credit card or bank-issued debit card.
9. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the using step further comprises:
locking the computer system with a screen saver to prevent its use when no authorization for use of the computer system is present; and
unlocking the computer system for use of the software application and the input/output device by displaying a desktop display upon a user receiving payment authorization through the electronic payment mechanism.

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10. (Original) The method of claim 1 and further comprising:
providing the input/output devices as at least one of a scanner, a printer, a facsimile machine, and a copier, each being configured for conveying input and output from the computer system.
11. (Currently Amended) A method of selective public access computing comprising:
providing a computer system with at least one software application;
displaying a user interface on a display of the computer system including a representation of the at least one software application of the computer system while preventing access to the at least one software application;
electronically reading a financial instrument;
obtaining electronic payment authorization for at the financial instrument;
permitting access to the at least one software application based on payment authorization;
tracking use of the computer system including the software application and input/output devices of the computer system;
charging the financial instrument with a fee based on the tracking step; and
terminating access to the at least one software application upon notification from the user.
12. (Cancelled)
13. (Currently Amended) ~~The computer system of claim 12 wherein the selective access mechanism includes:~~ A selective access computer system comprising:
a computing workstation having at least one software application;
a selective access mechanism for obtaining electronic payment authorization for a user's financial instrument and for permitting selective access to the computer workstation upon payment authorization for the user, the selective access mechanism including:
-a credit card and bank-issued debit card reader connected to the computing workstation for obtaining payment authorization; and
a resource tracker configured for determining an amount to be charged to the user

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based on at least one of a total amount of time that the computer system is used and a number of requests to input/output devices connected to the computer workstation.

14. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 13 wherein the computer workstation further comprises:

a program monitor configured for permitting selection of the at least one software application; and

a peripheral input/output monitor configured for permitting selection of at least one input/output device.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 13 wherein the selective access mechanism further comprises:

a screen saver configured for appearing on a display of the computing workstation to prevent access to the computing workstation until payment authorization is received.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) ~~The computer access system of claim 16 wherein the electronic payment mechanism further comprises:~~ A computer access system comprising:

an electronic payment mechanism for obtaining electronic payment authorization for a financial instrument;

a controller in communication with the electronic payment mechanism and configured for connection to a computer system and for permitting selective access to the computer system based on payment authorization through the electronic payment mechanism; and

wherein the electronic payment mechanism further comprises a financial instrument reader configured for electronically reading financial instruments including credit cards and debit cards.

18. (Currently Amended) A selective access computer system comprises:

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an electronic payment mechanism including a reader configured for obtaining electronic payment authorization for a user's financial instrument;

at least one input/output device;

a computer workstation including:

at least one software application; and

a resource tracker for determining a cost of using the computer system based on an amount of time of use and quantity of use of software applications and input/output devices; and

a user interface configured for permitting access to at least one of the software application and the input/output devices only upon payment authorization through the electronic payment mechanism.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing a method of permitting selective computer system access, the method comprising:

providing a computer system; and

permitting access to at least one of a software application and an input/output device of the computer system only after payment authorization has been obtained for the user via a financial instrument reader.

20. (Currently Amended) A computer user interface comprising:

a screen saver display configured for appearing on a monitor of a computer system when a user is not financially authorized to use the computer system and configured for preventing use of the computer system; and

a desktop display configured for appearing on a monitor of a computer system when a user is financially authorized to use the computer system and configured to permit access to and operation of the computer system when authorization is obtained via a financial instrument reader.